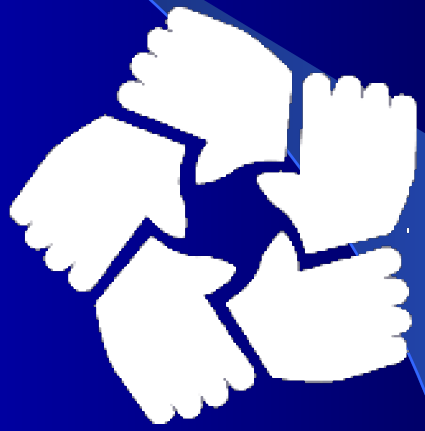
Employee Drug-Free Workplace Education

Working Partners for an Alcohol- and Drug-Free Workplace



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Employee Education Outline

- Objectives of training
- Overview of Drug-Free Workplace Policy
- Impact of substance abuse in the workplace
- Ways that people use alcohol and other drugs
- Understanding addiction
- Signs and symptoms of substance abuse
- Family and coworker impact
- Assistance
- Confidentiality
- Specific drugs of abuse

Objectives of Training

Employees should be familiar with the Drug-Free Workplace Policy and aware of the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. Employees should understand:

- The requirements of the policy
- The prevalence of alcohol and drug abuse and its impact on the workplace
- How to recognize the link between poor performance and alcohol and/or drug abuse
- The progression of the disease of addiction
- What types of assistance may be available

Overview of Drug-Free Workplace Policy

The Drug-Free Workplace Policy accomplishes two major things:

- Sends a clear message that alcohol and drug use in the workplace is prohibited
- Encourages employees who have problems with alcohol and other drugs to voluntarily seek help

The Drug-Free Workplace Policy exists to:

- Protect the health and safety of all employees, customers and the public
- Safeguard employer assets from theft and destruction
- Protect trade secrets
- Maintain product quality and company integrity and reputation
- Comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 or any other applicable laws

The Drug-Free Workplace Policy answers the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the policy and program?
- Who is covered by the policy?
- When does the policy apply?
- What behavior is prohibited?
- Are employees required to notify supervisors of drug-related convictions?
- Does the policy include searches?

- Does the program include drug testing?
- What are the consequences for violating the policy?
- Are there Return-to-Work Agreements?
- What type of assistance is available to employees needing help?
- How is employee confidentiality protected?
- Who is responsible for enforcing the policy?
- How is the policy communicated to employees?

Impact of Substance Abuse in the Workplace

- Employee health
- Productivity
- Decision making

- Safety
- Employee morale
- Security
- Organizational image and community relations

Ways People Use Alcohol and Other Drugs

Use:

- Experimentation
- Social/Recreational
- As a stress reliever

Abuse: Using a substance to modify or control mood or state of mind in a manner that is illegal or harmful to oneself or others. Potential consequences of abuse include:

- Accidents or injuries
- Blackouts
- Legal problems
- Poor job performance
- Family problems
- Sexual behavior that increases the risk of HIV infection

Addiction:

The irresistible compulsion to use alcohol and other drugs despite adverse consequences. It is characterized by repeated failures to control use, increased tolerance and increased disruption in the family.

Understanding Addiction

For one in ten people, abuse leads to addiction. Addiction to alcohol and other drugs is:

- Chronic
- Progressive
- Primary
- Terminal
- Characterized by denial

Risk of addiction:

- Addiction is a family disease
- Prior abuse of alcohol and other drugs
- Other contributing factors

Signs and Symptoms of Substance Abuse

Abuse of alcohol and other drugs affects people:

- Emotionally
- Behaviorally
- Physically

Emotional effects of substance abuse:

- Aggression
- Burnout
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Paranoia
- Denial

Behavioral effects of substance abuse:

- Slow reaction time
- Impaired coordination
- Slowed or slurred speech
- Irritability
- Excessive talking
- Inability to sit still
- Limited attention span
- Poor motivation or lack of energy

Physical effects of substance abuse:

- Weight loss
- Sweating
- Chills
- Smell of alcohol

Family and Coworker Impact

Enabling:

Action that someone takes to protect the person with the problem from the consequences of his or her actions. Unfortunately, enabling actually helps the person to NOT deal with his or her problem.

Examples of enabling:

- Covering Up
- Rationalizing
- Withdrawing/Avoiding
- Blaming
- Controlling
- Threatening

Examples of traps family members and coworkers may fall into:

- Sympathy
- Excuses
- Apology
- Diversions
- Innocence
- Anger
- Pity
- Tears

Assistance

Things to remember:

- Difficulty performing on the job can sometimes be caused by unrecognized personal problems - including addiction to alcohol and other drugs
- Help is available
- Although a supervisor may suspect that an employee's performance is poor because of personal problems, it is up to the employee to decide whether or not that is the case

- It is an employee’s responsibility to decide whether or not to seek help
- Addiction is treatable and reversible
- An employee’s decision to seek help is a private one and will not be made public

If EAP services are available:

- An EAP can help employees decide what to do if they have a problem with alcohol or other drugs
- An EAP also can help an employee decide what to do if someone in his/her family or workgroup has a problem
- Conversations with an EAP are confidential

If EAP services are not available, help may be available from:

- Community hotlines
- Self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Al-Anon, etc.
- Community mental health centers
- Private therapists or counselors
- Addiction treatment centers

Confidentiality

- Problems will not be made public
- Conversations with an EAP professional - or other referral agent - are private and will be protected
- All information related to performance issues will be maintained in his/her personnel file
- Information about referral to treatment, however, will be kept separately

- Information about treatment for addiction or mental illness is not a matter of public record and cannot be shared without a signed release from the employee
- If an employee chooses to tell coworkers about his/her private concerns, that is his/her decision
- When an employee tells his/her supervisor something in confidence, supervisors are obligated to protect that disclosure

If EAP services are available, employees are also assured that:

- EAP records are separate from personnel records and can be accessed only with a signed release from the employee
- EAP professionals are bound by a code of ethics to protect the confidentiality of the employees and family members that they serve
- There are clear limits on when and what information an EAP professional can share and with whom

However, there are some limits on confidentiality that may require:

- Disclosure of child abuse, elder abuse and serious threats of homicide or suicide as dictated by state law
- Reporting participation in an EAP to the referring supervisor
- Reporting the results of assessment and evaluation following a positive drug test
- Verifying medical information to authorize release time or satisfy fitness-for-duty concerns as specified in company policy
- Revealing medical information to the insurance company in order to qualify for coverage under a benefits plan

Specific Drugs of Abuse

- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Inhalants
- Cocaine
- Stimulants
- Depressants
- Hallucinogens
- Narcotics
- Designer Drugs

A Safer, Drug-Free Workplace

- Recognize the impact of alcohol and drug abuse on the workplace
- Understand and follow the Drug-Free Workplace Policy
- Remember the types of assistance available
- Access DOL's Working Partners Web Site www.dol.gov/workingpartners